Brixworth Neighbourhood Development Plan

As Submitted to Daventry District Council December 2015

APPENDIX

Landscape Assessments by
a) Lockhart Garratt Limited
b) Liz Lake Associates

BRIXWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
Appendix 1

Lockhart Garratt Limited

Landscape Character Assessment
September 2014
Brixworth
Parish Scale Landscape Character Assessment
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Brixworth Parish Council

REF: 14-1165 v3
DATE: 22nd September 2014

Prepared For
Brixworth Parish Council
c/o The Clerk to the Council
Mrs Emma Baker
4 Well Street
Finedon
Northamptonshire
NN9 5JP

Prepared By
Lockhart Garratt Ltd
7-8 Melbourne House
Corbygate Business Park
Weldon, Corby
Northamptonshire
NN17 5JG

Tel: 01536 408840
Email: info@lockhart-garratt.co.uk
Introduction

In August 2014 Lockhart Garratt Ltd was instructed by Brixworth Parish Council to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. This report is informed by the Landscape Character Assessment undertaken at the same time, and forms a tool to define the local landscape character and determine its sensitivity to change, so that this report may be used as evidence with which to assess future growth proposals.

The scale of the assessment was largely defined by the geographic extent of the study area, which was delimited by the extent of the church parish, as presented on Figure 1 below. This boundary is physically defined by the Brampton Arm of the River Nene watercourse which runs north-south to the west of Brixworth, and field drains in the north and south. The eastern parish boundary lies within Pitsford Water.

Methodology

This Parish Landscape Character Assessment (PLCA) follows the guidance within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (2013) published by the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Landscape Institute, and Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002) published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage. There are four main steps taken to complete this work:

- A systematic gathering and review of relevant data held by a variety of bodies and sources (desk study); identification of study areas and potential Local Character Areas;

Brixworth Parish Landscape Character Assessment

Appendix to Brixworth Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Ground survey, taking in identified landscape components and reviewing the desk study information in a real-world context;
- Review and assessment of all gathered data to define the character areas and level of sensitivity of each of the areas to landscape change; and
- Presentation of the results in a succinct and accessible document.

The desk study incorporated data from a number of online and map-based sources. These include aerial images, Ordnance Survey Data, historic maps and information held on the Multi Agency Geographic Information Centre (MAGIC) website.

Further to this (and perhaps more importantly), this assessment was fed by local knowledge, including experts in local history and ecology. Several volunteers were present during the ground survey to impart their knowledge of the parish, and their input was invaluable in ensuring that this report is locally informed and robust.

The Parish Character Types (PCTs) were defined through a process of identifying common and differing traits through the landscape and using these to divide the parish into areas which reflect the same landscape characteristics.

These characteristics include features such as geology and soils, topography, land use, field pattern, and vegetation, and are also influenced by other less tangible factors such as vistas, tranquillity, human disturbance, and visibility.

Although in this study definitive boundaries have been established between differing PCTs – often using linear features such as roads and field boundaries – it should be noted that in reality the distinction between one PCT and its neighbours is unlikely to be so absolute. To a large extent these boundaries are indicative, and the consideration of land close to or abutting these boundaries should take account of the assessments of all relevant PCTs to ensure that a definitive understanding is gained.
Parish Character Areas

Locally Complex Undulating Enclosed Pasture
This Parish Character Type is restricted to comparably small pockets to the west of the study area, which are situated on the steeper slopes abutting the settlement. Lying within the most abundant Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes Landscape Character Type, the land is geologically no different to the surrounding farmland, but the locally complex topography has probably helped to influence its use as pastoral over arable farming.
In places these fields are still enclosed with dry stone walls, which may or may not be accompanied by a hedge; elsewhere the walls are gone in favour of hedgerows.
These fields tend to be more enclosed and smaller than their arable counterparts, but the hillside siting still allows vast and open views.
Public access is limited, although local public highways run alongside these areas, and their distinct sense of history greatly defines the character of the village to visitors arriving from the west.
This is a highly sensitive Character Type and the fabric of the landscape and the historic context of the village would be adversely affected by development.
This PCT was designated as a Special Landscape Area in Northamptonshire County Council's Saved Policies (2007).

Clay Plateau Pasture
This small area of pasture land abuts the settlement to the east of the A508 and north of Holcot Road. It comprises just a small number of fields which differ from the pasture land elsewhere in the parish in soil type, elevation, and its flat topography.
The impeded drainage of the clayey soils has allowed a different sward to develop to the pasture land described above. The hedge boundaries vary in height, and define the fields as either small or medium in size. The busy public highways affect the tranquility of this area, as does the presence of the industrial units to the west and the presence of high voltage overhead cables, which often cross the fields from the industrial area.
An area to the north of the village between Mercedes Lane and the A508 has been planted with woodland; however the land shares characteristics with this Parish Character Type in terms of soil, historic usage, boundary treatment, and topography.
This Character Type is less sensitive to the effects of development; however presently the A508 largely forms a boundary to the eastern extent of the settlement, breaching this boundary could compromise its effectiveness, and lead to further development creep towards the highly sensitive land further downslope.
Open Undulating Hillside Farmland

This is a deeply characteristic landscape which rises from Pitsford Water in the east and covers a large area between the SSSI and the village. It is a network of fields which are predominantly pastoral to the south of Holcot Road and arable to the north; it incorporates a small number of isolated farmsteads and single dwellings. The topography is steeply undulating owing to the Quaternary superficial deposits over ironstone bedrock, which has produced an interesting and picturesque landscape with open views across Pitsford Water to the land beyond. Many of the original field boundaries have disappeared and been replaced with post and wire, however the hedgerow trees have survived and are over-mature and in some cases potentially of veteran classification, and help to define this as an historic landscape.

This Parish Character Type serves an important function in protecting the setting and the views of Pitsford Water, and is therefore highly sensitive to change of any kind.

Undulating Open Arable Farmland

This is the largest of the PCTs, and it forms the backdrop to the village. The expansive views to the west, where permitted, reveal the extent of this undulating and open arable landscape. The hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees divide the arable land into a patchwork field pattern with only small settlements in the distance. This is a valuable landscape in terms of rural definition, and yet the relationship with the village means that it could be under threat from erosion by development.

Most of this PCT is sensitive due to its openness and tranquil nature. The south-western fields offer expansive views to recreational users of Merry Tom Lane and the permissive access track at the southern village edge, as well as to residents who abut this Character Type. The fields to the north protect the setting of the Saxon church and as such would be very highly sensitive to change*, and to the north-west again the views are expansive and unspoilt.

Much of this PCT was designated as a Special Landscape Area in Northamptonshire County Council’s Saved Policies (2007).

1 http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/setting-heritage-assets/
Regionally Significant Green Infrastructure

This Character Type comprises Pitsford Water Site of Special Scientific Interest and the adjacent public access land, Country Park, sailing club, and Brampton Valley Way National Trail. As well as the SSSI designation, north of the reservoir causeway is a designated Local Nature Reserve. Survey studies have shown that Brampton Valley Way and Brixworth Country Park combined have as many visitors annually as the other four of the county's large outdoor attractions together (Barnwell, Fermyn Woods, Irchester, and Sywell Country Parks). This PCT is defined largely for its recreational importance, rather than its uniqueness. Due to its other designations it is highly unlikely to be the subject to development; however it is important that these areas are considered in the context of the development of adjacent or visually related sites due to its extreme sensitivity to landscape change.

Brixworth Village Settlement

Brixworth has a core of surviving history in the north of the settlement, owing largely to All Saints' church, which dates back to Saxon times. There are also a significant number of 17th and 18th century residential dwellings. The passage of time and village sprawl is evident with concentric bands of building styles that spread southwards, culminating in modern houses which are still under construction to the east of Northampton Road.

The older properties were at one time easily spotted by the distinctive ironstone which was the local and favoured building material, which gave way to red brick; however in recent years there has been a resurgence of building with traditional stone, and now, with replacement windows, repointing, and other home improvements it is difficult to tell a genuine historic cottage which has undergone renovation, from a 21st century development which mirrors the old building styles.
There is a presence of dry and mortared stone walls which continue from the surrounding parish into the village itself, which help to soften the rural-urban interface; these walls give way to red brick in the Victorian and pre-war development.

Newer developments have made an effort to reflect the styles of the village with subtle accents of both historic materials and styles, making the properties more varied in style and in keeping with the historic roots of the village, compared to properties of the latter 20th century (particularly the seventies and eighties) which largely reflect neither style nor materials true to the village character (although in their own way contribute to the diverse nature and feel of Brixworth).

There can be no doubt that Brixworth is a charmingly eclectic village, set in beautiful open farmland, with expansive, sometimes breath-taking views. Although it is the largest village in the area, the different building styles, small commercial centre, and lack of through traffic makes it feel much smaller and more intimate. The proximity of Pitsford Water, the nature reserve, and Brampton Valley Way National Trail, as well as the elevated views helps to define the bucolic setting and tranquillity of Brixworth.
Baseline Information Summary

*Please note all figures are presented as A3 size maps attached as appendices

National Character Area

Natural England’s National Character Assessment suite of documents places Brixworth within the Northamptonshire Uplands National Character Area. This area is described as possessing a rolling, hilly landform with long, level views criss-crossed by a regular pattern of hedgerows with frequent ash trees, which combine with frequent small copses to give the area a well-treed character. Settlements are generally located in small, sheltered valleys, giving the surrounding countryside a remote and empty quality.

Settlement character is described as small villages with red brick or ironstone buildings clustered around an ironstone church. Land form within this Character Area is described as a mixture of arable and pasture, with better hedgerows and more frequent hedgerow trees associated with pastoral land. The pasture land is also noted for containing a relatively high proportion of remnant ridge and furrow and the earthworks of deserted or shrunken settlements.

Current Landscape Character Assessment

The Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment was published by River Nene Regional Park in 2006. This presents a complex landscape characterisation around Brixworth, with the settlement itself lying in land associated with the Clay Plateau Landscape Character Type, although the parish boundary, and therefore the study area, also includes land representing the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes, and River Valley Floodplain Types. These three Character Types are described below.

Clay plateau

These are defined by a fairly uniform character owing to the Boulder Clay deposits which obscure the underlying geological varieties. The elevation and gently undulating landscape with limited wooded coverage presents open views and a sense of exposure in places.

Medium and large arable fields are dominant, with smaller pasture fields near to water courses. Field boundaries are generally clipped low and well maintained, although they are falling into disrepair in places.

This Landscape Character Type is of limited relevance in this context as its extent within Brixworth Parish has been developed, and the character as described here has been lost.

Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

The key characteristics as defined by the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment 2006 are:

- Broad valley slopes dissected by numerous tributary streams;
- Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils;
- Rolling landform, extensive views and sense of exposure in prominent locations;
- Steep slopes close to more elevated landscapes;
- Numerous waterbodies including the county’s largest reservoir;
- Productive arable farmland in medium and large scale fields predominates on elevated land although sheep and cattle pastures also prevalent, often in smaller fields adjacent to watercourses;
- Agricultural practices create a patchwork of contrasting colours and textures extending across valley slopes;
- Where broadleaved woodlands and mature hedgerow trees combine, these impart a sense of a well treed landscape;
- Hedgerows generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline;
- Well settled with numerous villages and towns;
- Landscape directly and indirectly influenced by the close proximity of many of the county’s urban areas; and
• Building materials may vary although vernacular architecture and churches display the local ironstone.

**River Valley Floodplain**

This is a narrow strip of land which incorporates the Brampton Valley Way in the west of the parish. This Landscape Character Type has been described as exhibiting the following characteristics:

• Valleys principally underlain by Lias Group mudstone geology, with alluvium along tributaries that drain each of the floodplains, together with areas of sand and gravel;
• Rivers follow a central course within the floodplain landscape;
• Flat floodplain landscapes that vary in width, surrounded by gently rising valley sides;
• Wide views over the predominantly open floodplain, contained by woodland and rising landscape types;
• A productive agricultural landscape with varying cover of both arable and pastoral land, with a predominance of arable in the valleys of Cherwell and Tove;
• Areas of neutral and calcareous grassland evident, often closely associated with areas of improved pasture;
• Woodland cover is generally sparse, although limited small linear copses are evident along the course of rivers, railways and canals;
• Concentrations of small woodlands and large parkland trees apparent around designed parklands;
• Hedgerows often gappy and grown out, with reinforcing post and wire fences frequent, in particular around pastoral fields;
• Limited semi-mature and mature hedgerow and river edge trees provide important vertical elements;
• Settlement extremely limited within the floodplain, confined to small village settlements and isolated farms and dwellings;
• Significant urban influences on floodplain landscapes from surrounding large scale settlements and associated infrastructure elements;
• Few heritage features evident, confined primarily to fields of ridge and furrow. The outer edges of parkland landscapes are evident in many valleys;
• Roads across the floodplains vary from minor country lanes crossing the floodplain, to busier ‘A’ roads, and on occasion motorways; and
• Recreational opportunities confined mainly to a network of footpaths, including numerous sections of national trails and leisure parks such as Wicksteed Park and Cosgrove Park.

**Tranquility**

The tranquillity mapping exercise undertaken by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) in 2008 is shown in context to the study area in [Figure 3](#) below. This study defines the parish of Brixworth as being generally of medium tranquillity, with areas of higher tranquillity to the east (in and around the nature reserve) and to the south-west, and the least tranquil area being in the north.

Figure 3 – CPRE Tranquillity Study in the context of Brixworth Parish

This study concurred with this, finding that on a local level the tranquillity level experienced differs significantly around the parish, with the *Clay Plateau Pasture* being significantly less tranquil than elsewhere. Surprisingly the *Open*
Appendix to Brixworth Neighbourhood Development Plan

Undulating Farmland, which was found to be the most sensitive to development (discounting Regionally Significant Green Infrastructure), was, in places, one of the least tranquil due to the presence of the main public highways A508 and Holcot Road.

The greatest level of tranquillity was felt to the west of the parish, with the expansive views, distinct historic landscape components, and virtual absence of traffic noise.

Geology and Soils
The village sits largely on a plateau of ferruginous sandstone, with an area of glacial till to the east. In the wider parish the slopes are dominated by claystone/mudstone, and Brampton Valley Way and the unnamed watercourse which demarks the western parish boundary follow a band of riverine clays, sands, and gravels.

Topography
The topography is often locally complex but generally gently undulating, owing to the geological variations beneath the surface. In all directions out of the village the land drops away from the plateau settlement (which lies at around 130m AOD) to around 75m AOD at the parish boundary.

In the east the parish boundary lies within the water of Rutland Water SSSI.

Historical Context
River Nene’s Historic Landscape Character Assessment (2006) places Brixworth within the Brampton Brook Ironstone Uplands Historic Landscape Character Area of the Modern Fields Historic Landscape Character Type. This is one of two areas defined by medium to large fields which are the result of the removal of hedgerows and field boundaries in the latter 20th Century. Brixworth is an historic settlement which is thought to have been occupied since the Neolithic period. The area is littered with finds of flint tools dating from this era and the Bronze Age.

A Roman villa was discovered in the 1970s to the north-west of the church and dated to before 70AD. To the north of the village there is evidence of Roman settlement which is assumed to have been occupied from 75AD to 400AD. There have been several other Roman discoveries within the parish, including at least five other settlement sites, but perhaps the most notable find was a hoard of Roman currency unearthed in the 1880’s, which included around 30 silver coins.

The remains of Saxon structures were uncovered to the south of the village during the construction of the bypass in 1988. Two years later a residential development proposal on land just west of this site prompted further archaeological surveys, which uncovered further Saxon building remains and pottery fragments, as well as flint tools from the Mesolithic era.

The most notable and celebrated historic asset of the village is the church of All Saints, a Basilian church dating in its current form to the 7th century (although complete with additions and renovations spanning subsequent centuries). This building has been described by historians as “the oldest Saxon church north of the Alps.” English Heritage has named it as one of the most significant buildings in England, and in January 2014 it was listed as number 11 of the top forty buildings of importance by the Daily Telegraph.

Other historic features include the village cross (dated 1727), Brixworth Hall (late 18th Century),

Brixworth Parish: Landscape Character Assessment
and a number of ironstone buildings dating to the 17th and 18th Centuries.

The older part of the village to the north still reflects the unusual layout of the 17th century whereby the older properties encircle the grounds of the hall with the church to the north.

The settlement is surrounded by a parliamentary field pattern typical of the villages of Northamptonshire. Field uses are largely arable to the south and pasture to the north. There are a small number of isolated dwellings, mostly active or converted farmsteads. To the south is a cricket ground.

Public Rights of Way

Just inside the western parish boundary and running north-south is Brampton Valley Way, a regionally important long distance route which provides a sustainable travel route between Northampton and Market Harborough along a disused railway line.

A second long distance route and bridleway (the Northamptonshire Round – CG15) enters the district from the east along the causeway and follows the waterline around Pitsford Water to Brixworth Country Park, where it traverses to Pitsford Hill and heads south-west, adjoining Brampton Valley Way at Merry Tom Crossing and exiting the parish to the south-west towards Chapel Brampton.

Public Footpath CG5 commences on Holcot Road and leads in a south-easterly direction through a residential area, past the recreation grounds off Iron Pikes, crosses the A508, and continues to join the Northamptonshire Round at Pitsford Water. This route of around 1km is predominantly set in an urban context.
Public Footpath CG2 leads from Scalldwell Road in the industrial north of the village in a south-easterly direction, passing Grange Farm and then adjoining Public Footpath CG12 between Holcot Road and the Reservoir. Once it passes the recycling centre, this is a rural path of around 2.7km with expansive views of the countryside.

There are also two rural Public Footpaths leading from the village in the north-west (CG8 and CG9), which adjoin Brampton Valley Way, providing a circuitous route of around 3km (part of this route is a Public Bridleway).

There are a small number of short Public Footpaths within the village which provide pedestrian short-cuts. One of these routes leads from Station Road past the allotments, All Saints Church, and Home Farm. There are also Permissive tracks circumventing some of the arable fields which are well-used by locals.

Public Highways
Brixworth is the largest settlement between the towns of Northampton and Market Harborough. The main public highway A508 by-passes Brixworth, constructed in 1988 to divert the growing volume of through-traffic. This road now forms a physical and perceptual boundary to the east of the village, with a marked change in the landscape east of this linear feature.

There are several smaller villages that satellite Brixworth; these are all adjoined by minor roads which are generally lined either with hedges (in various heights and states of repair), or stone walls.

Pitsford Water SSSI
Pitsford Water is a reservoir which supplies Northampton. It was built in 1950 and has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest since 1970, owing to its importance for water fowl. It is also an important shoreline habitat mosaic for flora, invertebrates, and breeding birds.

The north of the reservoir is managed as a nature reserve by Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust. The larger area, south of the causeway, incorporates Brixworth Country Park, and is a regional recreation facility with cycle hire, fishing, water sports, an 11km disabled access waterside track, children’s play areas, and picnic areas.

Views
The elevated setting of Brixworth offers expansive views from the settlement edge where vegetation allows. These views are typically of an unspoilt farmed landscape. These views are particularly felt from the southern edge of the village, which terminates suddenly on the western side of Northampton Road as the arable fields drop away into a rolling vale, presenting an expansive, unspoilt vista of the Rolling Ironstone Valley landscape.

The A508 main public highway is largely screened by vegetated bunds as it bypasses the village, which helps to keep it hidden from residents. Vehicles travelling south along this main Market
Harborough — Northampton route arrive first in the industrial area to the north, which perhaps gives a misleading first impression of Brixworth.

Conversely, the southern approach to the village along Northampton Road presently has a distinctly rural character, and presents a significantly different 'first look' to the village than the northern access. This route has expansive views to the east, west and south. The openness of the countryside gives way to densely built housing estates at the edge of the village, which presents an abrupt transition from rural to urban landscape; although this transition is separated and softened through the establishment of mature vegetation and the continuation of expansive views to the west of Northampton Road.

The road that leads from Holcot in the east first arrives in the parish across the causeway, which offers picturesque views across the water to an unspoilt bucolic landscape. Over the water the road rises, and thick vegetation prevents views to the side. However, travellers leaving the village are presented with an expansive open landscape from a slightly elevated perspective, with Pitsford Water as the centrepiece.

At the brow of the hill Holcot Road reaches a plateau, and the views open up in all directions. It is a long approach to the village itself (approximately 2km), and the presence of isolated farmsteads mark the approach; the transition is felt in advance due to the open views, so that by the time the traveller passes over the A508 they are prepared for the urban enclosure.

Conversely, travellers exiting the village by this route are presented immediately with a plateau of open pasture and views of the reservoir in the middle distance away to the right.
APPENDIX 2

Liz Lake Associates

Landscape and Visual Issues

on a Proposed Site to the
West of Northampton Road, Brixworth

on behalf of
Daventry District Council

August 2012
LIZ LAKE ASSOCIATES
Chartered Landscape Architects • Urban Designers • Landscape Planners

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE:
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ISSUES

PREPARED BY:
Michelle Bolger BA[ENG] BA [L.ARCH] DIP LA CMLI
Chartered Landscape Architect

ON BEHALF OF:
Daventry District Council

IN THE MATTER OF:
An appeal by Society of Merchant Venturers against the refusal of planning permission for application for residential development of 150 dwellings, allotments, play area, associated public open space, landscaping and new vehicular and pedestrian accesses on land to west of Northampton Road, Brixworth, Northamptonshire

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APP/Y2810/A/12/2171440

LPA:
DAVENTRY DISTRICT COUNCIL

LPA REF:
DA/2011/0628

DATE:
August 2012
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF MICHELLE BOLGER

Qualifications and Experience

1.1 My name is Michelle Bolger; I am a Chartered Landscape Architect and an Associate of Liz Lake Chartered Landscape Architects and Urban Designers. I have a degree and a diploma in Landscape Architecture from Greenwich University and I am a Member of the Landscape Institute. I have worked at Liz Lake Associates since 1996.

1.2 I have prepared Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (L VIA) to accompany planning applications for a range of projects including residential, leisure and commercial developments and worked on a range of projects involving historic landscapes. Over the last eight years I have given evidence at appeal, call-in and local plan inquiries with regard to the impact of development on the landscape, visual amenity and the historic environment.

The Existing Landscape

1.3 The Site is located within the Hängen Haughton Rolling Ironstone Slopes LCA on land that slopes south from the edge of the Brixworth (MB Figure 3). Brixworth is located on higher land within the Sywell Clay Plateau LCA. The site currently contributes positively to the character of the edge of Brixworth and views on the approach to the village along Northampton Road from the south. In addition to the general slope of the site from 125m AOD to 100m AOD, the site contains a minor valley that adds complexity to the landscape. (MB Figure 2 and MB Figure 8)

1.4 The site is adjacent to existing residential development. Residential development to the east of the site indicates some of the problems associated with locating residential development on sloping land as the houses appear to flow down the slope.

1.5 Part of the site is located within the Daventry SLA. The SLA covers an area of attractive, undulating landscape that contributes to the setting of a number of villages and urban areas although it does not generally about the larger urban areas. From Northampton Road there are long distance views across the Site and over the Brampton Valley, to the hills beyond. (MB Figure 8) The landscape in these views is part of the SLA. Views across the Site are noted in the Brixworth Village Design Statement.

1.6 The site has a medium/high sensitivity to residential development.
The Impact of the Proposals

1.7 The proposals do not appear to respond well to the topography of the site. In particular the most southerly cluster of houses in the submitted proposals would be located on sloping land and would be partly within the SLA. (MB Figure 4) The Revised Masterplan has removed these houses but the edge of the development still does not appear to respond to the topography of the site. (MB Figure 7)

1.8 The access road will extend the urban influence of the village significantly beyond any actual development and would require the removal of a section of stone wall that currently contributes to the approach to the village. There are problems associated with both the submitted access road and the revised access road. The revised access road has been proposed to remove the need for extensive earthworks required because of the level changes along the original alignment of the access road which crossed the lowest point of the Site. (MB Figure 8) However the original alignment was located close to the Site boundary whilst the revised alignment runs diagonally across the land to the south of the existing development. The revised access road will appear incongruous as it will be seen crossing the land beyond the edge of the settlement. The access road is likely to have much greater visual presence than suggested in the photomontage from Northampton Road (fprr Viewpoint A) due to lighting columns and other highway infrastructure such as a footway and kerbing.

1.9 There would be a loss of character at the village edge due to the extension of Brixworth beyond the clay plateau onto the rolling ironstone slopes. There would also be a loss of the existing landscape character in the amenity area proposed for the land to the south of the proposed housing. The amenity area would be associated with the urban area rather than the rural area and the existing character both of the SLA and of the edge of Brixworth would be changed.

1.10 Planting proposals for the southern boundary and within the amenity area would interrupt the longer distance views across the wider landscape. (See fprr Viewpoint A) The character of the SLA within the Site would be significantly altered and it would become a landscape buffer between the agricultural land and the village.

1.11 Overall the impact on the local landscape character and the character of the edge of Brixworth would be *moderate adverse* although the most southerly group of houses in the submitted proposals and the access road for both the submitted and revised proposals would have a *moderate major adverse impact.*
1.12 Although more distant views of the development from the wider landscape would not be significant from closer to, in particular from Northampton Road, the impact on visual amenity would be moderate adverse. Although the Revised scheme would be an improvement on the submitted proposals the visual impact of the revised access road, the loss of the open panoramic views and the change to the setting of the edge of the village would also result in a moderate adverse impact.

1.13 There is a possibility that there might be some overbearing impacts on properties at the southern end of Stonehill Way.

Conclusions

1.14 I have reached the conclusion that:

- The proposals do not respond well to the topography of the Site
- The most southerly cluster of houses in the submitted proposals would be located on sloping land and would be partly within the SLA
- The access road will extend the urban influence of the village significantly beyond any actual development; this is the case for both the submitted and revised proposals
- There would be a loss of the expansive character at the village edge due to the extension of Brixworth beyond the clay plateau onto the rolling Ironstone slopes. This loss would be greater with the submitted than with the revised proposals
- Long distance views within the SLA, across the Brampton Valley would be interrupted.
APPENDIX 1 TO PROOF OF EVIDENCE: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ISSUES

PREPARED BY:
Michelle Bolger BA(ARCH) DIP LA CHLI
Chartered Landscape Architect

ON BEHALF OF:
Daventry District Council

IN THE MATTER OF:
An appeal by Society of Merchant Venturers against the refusal of planning permission for application for residential development of 150 dwellings, allotments, play area, associated public open space, landscaping and new vehicular and pedestrian access on land to west of Northampton Road, Brixworth, Northamptonshire

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LP:
DAVENRY DISTRICT COUNCIL

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FIGURES:
MB Figure 1: Site Location in Relation to Special Landscape Area
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MB Figure 3: Local Landscape Character Areas
MB Figure 4: Illustrative Masterplan with Ordnance Survey Contours
MB Figure 5: Agricultural Land Classification
MB Figure 6: Northamptonshire Special Landscape Areas and Landscape Character Areas
MB Figure 7: Revised Illustrative Masterplan with Ordnance Survey Contours
MB Figure 8: View Across Site from Proposed Access on Northampton Road
MB Figure 9: View Towards Site from Merry Tom Way